

all. And that also would be bad for employees."

Ms. Gerber noted that pension conversions in Iowa, Senator Grassley's state, generally make it clear that companies are backing away from traditional pensions. In the mid-1970's there were about 1,100 pension plans in Iowa, she said, but now there are fewer than 400. With some companies deciding not to offer any pensions at all, she said, Mr. Grassley sees a need to find some balance between protecting workers' benefits and offering employers incentives to stay in the pension system.

"The anti-cash-balance people are just anti-cash-balance," she said. "But if you just make cash-balance plans illegal, what are the plan sponsors going to do?"

The Congressional Research Service, a nonpartisan branch of the Library of Congress, did the study at the request of Mr. Sanders, who has introduced legislation opposing cash-balance conversions in the past—none of it successful. He said he hoped the new findings would "show the hypocrisy" of colleagues who would let other people undergo pension conversions but would not have to suffer ill effects themselves.

"If they think a cash-balance plan is good enough for American workers, why don't they convert their own pensions?" he asked in an interview.

He said he intended to introduce legislation this week that would force Congress to put its money where its mouth is: it would require the conversion of all Congressional pensions to the cash-balance type if the legislators allow the administration's proposed regulations to go forward.

Mr. Sanders himself would lose 72 percent of his pension if that happened. Based on an age of 61, with 12 years of service, he qualified for a \$416,159 lump-sum payment at the end of 2002. In a cash-balance model, he would have received \$115,850.

He would not comment on the prospects for his cash-balance legislation. Perhaps more pragmatically, he said he would also introduce legislation to require companies converting their pensions to let each worker choose whether to keep the old plan or go with the cash-balance plan.

Some companies have done this voluntarily, he noted.

"Kodak has done that," he said. "Motorola has done that. CSX, which is the new secretary of the Treasury's company," had done that, he said, referring to John W. Snow, who was chief executive of CSX, the railway company, before Mr. Bush appointed him in December to replace Paul H. O'Neill. As Treasury secretary, Mr. Snow has authority over the proposed regulations.

All of those companies converted, Mr. Sanders said, "but they gave workers the choice."

#### AIR TRAFFIC RETIREMENT REFORM ACT OF 2003

**HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 12, 2003*

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Air Traffic Retirement Reform Act of 2003. This legislation will grant air traffic controllers, and more specifically air traffic controller supervisors, the same treatment that Federal firefighters and law enforcement officers (LEOs) receive under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

Both the CSRS and the FERS provide early retirement benefits and require mandatory separation for safety-related occupations, including Federal firefighters, LEOs and air traffic controllers. Under both CSRS and FERS, firefighters/LEOs and controllers are eligible for retirement after 25 years of service or after becoming 50 years old and completing 20 years of service. Additionally, the annuities for firefighters, LEOs and controllers are higher than ordinary Federal employees under CSRS and FERS.

However, the current definition of an air traffic controller in both CSRS and FERS is limited to people who are actively engaged in directing air traffic or their immediate supervisors. As a result, air traffic controllers who are promoted to staff specialists or second level managers before they are eligible to retire lose all benefits currently guaranteed controllers under CSRS and FERS. Yet, firefighters and LEOs that are promoted to management positions do not need to make a similar sacrifice.

The Air Traffic Retirement Reform Act of 2003 amends the CSRS and FERS to provide a more expansive two-tier definition of air traffic controllers. The new definition will include both employees covered under the current definition of air traffic controllers and second level supervisors. Second level supervisors would be eligible for the same retirement benefits available to line-controllers.

The Air Traffic Retirement Reform Act of 2003 provides fairness and parity between air traffic controllers and other Federal safety professionals.

#### TRIBUTE TO BERNARD DOWIYOGO

**HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 12, 2003*

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express condolences for the late Bernard Dowiyogo, President of Nauru, who passed away on March 9, 2003, in Washington, DC. The people of Nauru first elected President Dowiyogo to their parliament in 1973, only five years after achieving independence from Australia in 1968. Since then he was repeatedly elected to serve a number of successful terms as President of Nauru. The island nation of Nauru is a proud friend of the United States and a well respected neighbor of Guam in the Asia-Pacific community. I urge the Parliament of Nauru to put partisan differences aside and come together to commemorate the legacy of President Dowiyogo. I ask of this Congress that, in our prayers, we remember the family of President Dowiyogo, who is survived by his wife and four children.

#### BIRTH DEFECTS AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PREVENTION ACT (H.R. 398)

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 12, 2003*

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I don't know all of the reasons why this bill was pulled from the

suspension calendar today. But I hope it will be re-scheduled for our consideration soon. I support passage of this bill sponsored by my New Jersey colleague, Congressman MIKE FERGUSON. It will re-authorize the important work of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) within the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Statutory authorization for this particular national center expired at the end of Fiscal Year 2002.

But at the same time, I also want to underscore my concern that officials of the CDC and the National Center on Birth Defects do not currently intend to continue approximately \$1 million in annual funding beyond Fiscal Year 2003 for the New Jersey Center for Birth Defects Research and Prevention, which is located in the City of Trenton. This would be very short-sighted and inefficient.

The New Jersey Center is one of eight such state centers that CDC established in 1997, at the direction of Congress. Since then, they have been hard at work developing a statewide registry and database on the incidence of birth defects and linking them to new research. Continuing this important work will help us determine what factors might be causing birth defects. It could yield invaluable insights into whether exposure to certain environmental hazards, for example, contributes to birth defects.

Sadly, our nation is now confronting huge budget deficits for years to come. But the CDC and the National Center on Birth Defects should build upon their initial five-year investment and continue their modest funding for all of the state efforts already compiling this vital information to help determine what causes birth defects.

Doing all we can to prevent birth defects and to learn more about what contributes to them is not a partisan issue. Accordingly, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to sustain federal support for New Jersey and other states that have taken the lead in developing this tracking data, while also enabling more states to do so.

#### A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF HUGH B. PRICE: AUTHOR, LAWYER, CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER, PUBLIC SERV- ANT

**HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 12, 2003*

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to pay tribute to a great man who is retiring as the leader of one of our most cherished leadership organizations.

For the past nine years, Hugh B. Price has worked tirelessly to preserve and fortify the legacy of the National Urban League—the nation's oldest and largest community-based movement dedicated to moving African Americans into the social and economic mainstream. As president and chief executive officer of this ninety-two year old organization, Hugh Price's visionary leadership has prepared the Urban League Movement for a second century of leadership and service.

Given his successful tenure, it is only fitting that the Congress honor his accomplishments and thank him for his excellent stewardship.